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Connecticut Council of Small Towns
Before the Planning & Development Committee
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SB-203 - AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY RESIDENCES

The Connecticut Council of Small Towns (COST) supports **SB-203**, which would require community residences to comply with all local zoning and land use regulations and ordinances.

Although we support efforts to assist individuals with intellectual, mental or physical disabilities in establishing community residences, we are concerned that under existing law, community residences are permitted to ignore local zoning and land use regulations and ordinances.

Towns throughout Connecticut spend an inordinate amount of time and resources crafting local zoning and land use regulations to guide development and, address traffic and public safety issues to protect residents. Municipalities are also under pressure to adopt zoning and land use regulations that comply with the state Plan of Conservation & Development and various environmental laws and policies to protect environmentally sensitive areas from development.

Allowing community residences to sidestep a town's zoning and land use regulations undermines the ability of towns to fulfill their obligation to protect the safety and welfare of residents as well as efforts to implement smart growth policies to protect the environment and natural resources.

COST therefore supports efforts to address the inconsistency in the law which insulates community residences from compliance with local zoning and land use regulations and ordinances.